

New

Music • America

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Edited by
Iris Brooks

Thanks to everyone who generously contributed to this book.
I am also grateful to my family, friends, and colleagues whose
input and ears were most valuable.

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Big or Small? Think Global, Act Local

Music is primarily a non-verbal art form and musicians are often uncomfortable articulating their art with words. This makes writing about music difficult. And yet, reading (and writing) about music serves many purposes. It stimulates, provokes, communicates, educates, codifies; it helps us focus and absorb, remember and reflect, as it brings us away from insularity and isolation in thoughts about art and being an artist.

Music festivals serve many of these same functions. One of the biggest differences though, is that the festival remains temporal; it is planned, it exists, it is over. The New Music Across America (NMAA) festival is essentially a patchwork quilt celebrating a variety of new music. For the first time, the 1992 New Music (Across) America takes place simultaneously in many sites.

A book, recording, or film about a music festival gives it a new existence in another format and places it in a historical context. The *New Music Across America* book serves to frame the quilt and bind it together. Often the beauty of something large is most appreciated from a distance. This book helps us take a step back from the specific sites and sounds of NMAA and consider the larger picture, while examining a festival which has at once grown larger and smaller.

Geographically NMAA sweeps through 16 cities in North America and even lands at points in Europe. A videophone helps to expand the global capabilities of the fest even more as, for example, the music of the Los Angeles festival is heard at the Stichting STEIM in Amsterdam. More than any previous New Music America, this festival is regional and at the same time it covers a larger area and provides an opportunity for an expanded audience base. Has New Music America become bigger or smaller, or both? Perhaps it is like a large, old tree whose substantial base stretches up and out as new branches appear thinner, and a bit more fragile as they extend in many directions. The concerns of the Festival are both more local and more global as presenters feature many regional artists while working with the larger goals of the New Music Alliance.

This book captures not only the celebratory moments of a fest, but it explores the ideas generated around and through the music — ideas which live on in pictures and words. It is my hope that these essays and photographs will give an overview to the New Music Across America festival and encourage many to seek out new music and experience it. For ultimately, there is no satisfying substitute for hearing and playing music.

Iris Brooks
New York
Summer, 1992

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New Music America History: A Caterpillar Or A Butterfly?

By Iris Brooks

What exactly is new music?

- When Tim Page played the music of Perotin (c.1155-1200) on his WNYC public radio program, *New, Old, and Unexpected*, he was contacted by an irate listener who couldn't stand this "new music!"
- John Cage — who died in August of 1992, shortly before his 80th birthday — told us that music is the sounds around us and he sometimes opened his Sixth Avenue windows wide to hear the music of the streets below. His piece *4' 33"* taught many of us to listen to silence as well.
- Harry Partch focused on the corporeal aspects of music, creating works using micro-tonality, his own homemade instruments, and a new notation; yet he never associated himself with the avant-garde or new music.

The Harvard Dictionary of Music (c.1972) tells us new music is "a term adapted from German *neue Musik* as a designation for various novel and radical trends in 20th-Century music, such as atonality, serial techniques, etc. The term, which was introduced c.1925, is interesting historically, since similar names were used for similar reasons both 300 and 600 years ago, i.e., the *nuove musiche* of 1600 and the *ars nova* of 1300." Curiously, this listing used throughout the '70s, is deleted from *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (revised in 1986).

Any definition is bound to be somewhat subjective incorporating the perception of the person answering within the context of history and geography. For some, new music is simply new sounds not heard before. In New York — where the New Music America festival began in 1979 — the term "new music" had different connotations. It referred to experimental work being done mostly downtown, as opposed to the more academic music found in universities and uptown. The "downtown / uptown" terminology began as geographic references within New York City and later became part of the international music vocabulary.

Atonality and serial techniques were old; minimalism, conceptual and performance art, and text-sound were considered more cutting edge. The influences and appropriation of elements of vernacular culture were becoming incorporated into new music. Suddenly minimalism was old guard. Boundaries between jazz, world, and new musics began to blur. The downtown/uptown schism declined and was perceived by many as irrelevant. Developments in technology provided instant access to varied sound palettes and allowed music to return to a more aural tradition. Notated scores became less important as electronic musicians across the country continued to work with digital sampling and computers in a new, home-studio-based culture.

As alternative (and not-so-alternative) rock bands began calling themselves new music, the term had less meaning than ever. Evolving in parallel with New Music America, was the misnamed and unrelated New Music Seminar (which also spawned regional offspring). The New Music Seminar is a pop music industry showcase whose name and presence is felt internationally. When composer Raphael Mostel travelled to Japan with his Tibetan Singing Bowl Ensemble (New Music for Old Instruments) in 1991, he was required to retranslate the meaning of new music to Japanese musicians who associated the genre with rock.

The New Music America festival began as New Music, New York in 1979 at The Kitchen. Philip Glass, Meredith Monk, Robert Ashley, Pauline Oliveros, Charles Amirkhanian, Laurie Spiegel, Steve Reich, Scott



photo: © John Fago

John Cage, Iris Brooks, R.I.P. Hayman, Conlon Nancarrow

Johnson, and Laurie Anderson were among those involved in this landmark event. It was the first major festival that brought together a broad spectrum of experimental American music as well as a critics conference. Tom Johnson, music critic for the *Village Voice* felt the Festival marked the institutionalization of what had previously been considered "music on the fringes of official culture." In reviewing this ten-day festival, John Rockwell wrote in *The New York Times*, "Soho has arisen as a place where the contradictory tendencies of isolationism and cosmopolitanism can meet." The festival was so successful that many people were turned away from each concert due to a lack of space.

In 1980, Nigel Redden, director of NMA '80, and Libby Larsen, then director of the Minnesota Composers Forum, named New Music America over breakfast in a Minneapolis kitchen (not The Kitchen). At that time, with the guidance of the New Music Alliance (the governing body of the Festival), plans were underway to make the Festival an annual event. San Francisco was already slated to host the fest the following year. The event in 1980 was much larger than New Music, New York. Hosted by the Walker Arts Center, NMA '80 included larger performing spaces, more artists, as well as quite a few sound installations at varied sites. The presence of the fest was felt throughout the Twin Cities. Brian Eno's *Music for Airports* was played at the airport and the downtown mall sound system became a new music sound system. "The Festival was a natural outgrowth of New Music, New York in that participants wanted to continue the energy generated by the meetings, the performances, and the schmoozing," said Redden. In the catalog he wrote, "Computers and violins, tape recorders and bicycles, guitars and synthesizers all play a role in the music to be heard as part of New Music America. The only common denominator is a sensibility the composers share that is open to experiment with new techniques, new instruments, and new ideas."

Since then the sentiment has basically remained the same as NMA has travelled from one city to the next each year, usually expanding along the way: New York City in 1979 (curated and directed by Rhys Chatham and Mary MacArthur), Minneapolis in 1980 (Nigel Redden), San Francisco in 1981 (Robin Kirck), Chicago in 1982 (Peter Gena and Alene Valkanas), Washington, D.C. in 1983 (Bill Warrell, Deborah Hanzlik, and Bob Wisdom), Hartford in 1984 (Joseph Celli and Mary Luft), Los Angeles in 1985 (Carl Stone and Joan La Barbara), Houston in 1986 (Pauline Oliveros, Jerry McCathern, and Michael Galbreth), Philadelphia in 1987

(Joseph Franklin), Miami in 1988 (Mary Luft and Joseph Celli), New York in 1989 (Yale Evelev), and Montreal in 1990 (Jean Piché).

At each New Music America festival, someone tried to define the ever-changing new music. The late Jim Pomeroy addressed the question in his essay, "Ruminations, Mythology, Pluralism, & A Non-Linear Precursor" in the San Francisco NMA '81 catalog. "The notion of New Music itself is difficult to define. Part of the problem has to do with the expanding boundaries of all art-forms in the last twenty years. It is often no longer possible to discern whether a given work is theatre, music, or 'performance art,' whether something is an instrument, a sound sculpture, or an environmental installation, whether a particular narrative or formalist idea resides most comfortably as art, theatre, music, or literature. And, most emphatically, it's not important to categorize as such." As the Festival moved from one city to the next, the inclusion or exclusion of inter-art works varied. San Francisco featured film and video as well as sound installations at the Exploratorium, the Museum of Modern Art, New Langton Arts, and the Palace of Fine Arts while Laurie Anderson provided an opening act for Lou Harrison's *gamelan* ensemble. Chicago made use of the zoo (Kirk Nurock and the Natural Sound Ensemble), the pier, and the harbor including Alvin Curran's *Maritime Rites* for 50 singers and tape recorders on rowboats and Charlie Morrow's *Toot 'n Blink* for lights and horns on pleasure crafts and speedboats. Hartford had listening rooms for audio and video and provided sound works on the Amtrak express train from New York to Hartford.

During the evolution of music in the '80s, the New Music America festival kept abreast with the changes and continued to present a wide variety of new work. The 1983 convention of new music took place in the nation's capital, with Washington D.C. institutions such as the Smithsonian lending a growing credibility and legitimacy to the fest. I played with Peter Griggs and Glen Velez at NMA '83 in the National Air and Space Museum. Was the magical atmosphere I felt due to the ambient constellations appearing on the domed-ceiling of the Einstein Spacearium or was it a sense of connection with a larger new music community?

The new music community continued to grow. When the fest went to Los Angeles in 1985, 25 arts organizations formed a consortium to work together for common goals. Artistic directors Joan La Barbara and Carl Stone wrote in their catalog, "we are honoring the tradition of the New Music Alliance, searching out what is 'newest' in new music, and presenting it alongside that which is historically significant, providing an exciting forum for the living art of our time." The goals of the Festival remain essentially the same today as NMA celebrates and supports contemporary American music of many styles.

The unprecedented growth of the Festival is obvious when considering the 1979 fest in N.Y. presented about 50 composers and assorted panel discussions over a ten-day period in a space that held 250 people. NMA '86 in Houston included a series called "And Everything Under the Sun" — which could be taken literally — as each successive Festival grew larger and more diverse. NMA'87 in Philadelphia included the exchange of ideas, perspectives, and critical thought in their Talking Music Conference with panels such as "New Music and the Literary Imagination" and "Music, Technology, and Cultural Change." In addition, Joseph Franklin worked with the Good Sound Foundation, giving particular consideration to sonic and acoustical considerations. When the Festival returned to New York in 1989, it became a mad dash around the city while trying to be everywhere at once. Searching for meaning in random movement and trying to turn chaos into a geometric design left many exhilarated but with sore feet and pounding headaches. Could the Festival possibly get larger? Yes, NMA '90 in Montreal was produced with a budget of more than \$1.5 million and involved about 80 concerts reaching an audience of over 21,000. Each year the scale continued to escalate until an appropriate city and sponsor could no longer be found.

In an effort to keep New Music America alive, the New Music Alliance, the Board of Directors of NMA, began an intense and on-going brainstorming process. The organization realized it had become a bit of a dinosaur and needed a fresh perspective to breathe new life and new ideas into the fest. The original goals of the Festival had not changed as drastically as the format.

In 1897 Mark Twain announced in a cable from London to the Associated Press, "the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." The same could be said of the New Music America festival in 1992. Articles have appeared in New York's *Village Voice* and *The Los Angeles Times* fueling the misconception of the Festival's demise.

In spite of assorted public and private pronouncements and predictions of its death, New Music America lives on. In 1991, NMA went on sabbatical and during the one-year hiatus, the New Music Alliance conceived of New Music Across America. Carl Stone of the Alliance explained, "It was a time to reflect



photo: © Tom Caravaglia

Soldier String Quartet: Mary Wooten, Ron Lawrence, Laura Seaton, David Soldier

and think about the future. We were beating the old format to death; it was time to consider new ideas. I was thrilled when David Moss came up with the more grassroots concept of New Music Across America." This reincarnation of the Festival on October 1 - 4, 1992, takes place in fourteen U.S. cities, two Canadian cities, and two European cities. Departing from its one-city format, New Music America stretches across North America in a (somewhat) united effort to present (primarily) experimental, (mostly) American music. Although artistic direction is determined by each participating site, the goals of the Alliance prevail.

Opinions are mixed as to the new direction. "The beauty of the Festival is how it changed each year, reflecting the personality of its new city and director," commented Mary Luft, co-director with Joe Celli of NMA '84 in Hartford and NMA '88 in Miami. Some feel NMA has served its purpose and it is time to let it go. "I feel NMA should die. It's outlived its usefulness and failed to generate responsible and informed audiences," said Joseph Franklin, director of Relache and NMA '87 in Philadelphia. Elliott Sharp agrees, "I thought NMA had breathed its last breath. NMA should die; it was so insular and political."

Others disagree and are enthusiastic about the new direction of the fest. Pauline Oliveros, who has perhaps participated in more NMA events than any other musician, and served as artistic director of NMA '86 in Houston, thinks that the Festival is "much better in smaller units. It's too unwieldy to do something so big and it was too exhausting to go to." Some are excited about the smaller more grassroots approach which de-emphasizes the commercialization of new music and focuses on regional as well as nationally known artists. "The power of this year's Festival is enhanced by many communities joining together in a national, communal celebration of new music," says Phillip Kent Bimstein, who is bringing NMAA to the canyons of Utah and a local cowboy bar in a town of 300 people.

After the first Festival in 1979, John Rockwell wrote in *The New York Times*, "A case can be made that much of the finest American music has been composed by rugged individualists, cut off by geographical or psychological isolation from the mainstream of American culture." Perhaps New Music Across America will bring attention to some of these rugged individualists scattered throughout the land, following in the footsteps of iconoclast American composers such as Conlon Nancarrow, Carl Ruggles, Charles Ives, Harry Partch, and those unknown to us.

Five hundred years after Amerigo Vespucci landed on this continent, there is still much confusion surrounding the meaning of America. According to the American College Dictionary, the definition of America is: "1. The United States of America. 2. North America. 3. South America 4. North and South America."

Perhaps the concept of America is not just about land mass and boundaries, but more of a mind-set. Clearly, America (and New Music America) is a celebration of diversity. But what America is (and means), also depends on where you live. In some places, borders are arbitrary; not necessarily reflecting cultural distinctions. For example, the Texas-Mexican border is liquid for many who live nearby. New Yorkers tend to be both ethno and geocentric, yet accustomed to multiculturalism as the norm in a city filled to the brim with all the ingredients of the melting pot. It's easy to forget about our northern and southern neighbors, because we already have an incredible cultural mix. This is not so true in other parts of the country.

Our varying visions of what America is can be viewed geographically through this festival. Utah focuses on Native American music, while southern California and New Mexico include Mexican musicians. Portland, Maine and Seattle, Washington look northward and include Canadian musicians. Hawaii peers East in a program of cross cultural sharing with Asia. Chicago's concern centers on African-American traditions.

Ajule Rutlin, a drummer and poet from the group Eneke-the-Bird, writes from Tuscon, Arizona with a strong political view. "Our core group is intercultural. One of our main focuses as a group is the uplifting of the Black Music Traditions — past, present, and future — which are under-referenced, misunderstood, and routinely trivialized. We believe that African-based music / creativity is one of the cornerstones of Amerikan (*sic*) culture and identity." Eneke-the-Bird performs in NMAA alongside Mexican and New Mexican composers.

An expanded view of what "America" means was reflected in Miami's NMA '88 with the substantial presence — for the first time — of Latin American musicians. Yet Joe Celli and Mary Luft's vision in 1988 made many of us reconsider the concept of America, and in 1990, New Music America was hosted by a Canadian city, Montreal. Program notes were often bilingual, and occasionally appeared only in French.

As the Festival stretches across the continent, there is another first in the history of New Music America. The 1992 event has two European presenters. Amsterdam's De IJsbreker and Berlin's Freunde Guter Musik Berlin, both known as new music performing spaces, turn their attention to American musicians for their branch of the fest. Jan Wolff, director of De IJsbreker explained, "In our contribution to the Festival, we want to prove that Europe and America need each other in their musical progress. We consider New Music Across America an excellent opportunity to 'musicalize' this concept. We present The Soldier String Quartet with a 'typical' American program (pieces by Elliott Sharp, David Soldier, and Jimi Hendrix) and composer Eric Stokes speaks about Dutch versus American music."

The program in Berlin takes place in a beautiful, baroque church which was heavily damaged in World War II and subsequently used as a storage space for furniture and more recently as a venue for cultural activities. Matthias Osterwold's satellite festival in Berlin demonstrates a personal as well as aesthetic link between North American music and certain developments in Berlin. The festival features Arnold Dreyblatt — an American composer living in Europe since the mid '80s — who integrates elements of European folk traditions and minimalism with multimedia performance pieces dealing with aspects of European history. Dreyblatt performs with his group, the Orchestra of Excited Strings and Winds. Like Dreyblatt, Berlin-based composer Werner Durand and his ensemble The 13th Tribe are inspired by traditional musics of many places. Both groups make use of invented, adapted, and mutated instruments in their work. The concept of having a foreign branch of the Festival on a larger scale is one of many ideas being discussed for future years of NMA as the Board looks for new ways to give new life to the fest.

Many musicians have opinions about who played in past NMA festivals, who should have played, and who should not have played. Herb Levy of Soundwork Northwest in Seattle (and former president of the Alliance), compiled a database of 669 musicians who participated in the fest from 1979-1990. The results are somewhat suprising. Levy commented, "If nothing else this database shows that the often-voiced perception that NMA kept presenting the same people is wrong. More than two-thirds of the artists were presented only once and only forty-four artists (less than 7%) were presented at more than a quarter of the festivals. Of the 669 artists and 12 festivals: 464 had work presented at only one festival, 105 at two festivals, 56 at three, 22 at four, 14 at five, six at six, one at seven, and one at eight. I'd be very suprising if many other festivals could show such a range of composers presented and that includes those festivals which present music drawn from several centuries rather than from several decades."

"What the caterpillar calls the end
of the world, the master calls
a butterfly."



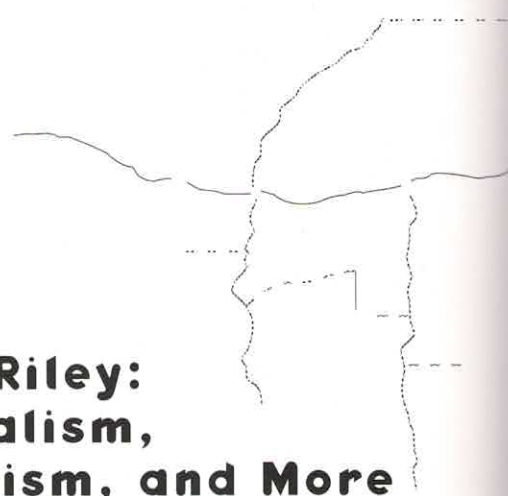
photo: © John Lovett

Iris Brooks

What these statistics don't reflect is the diversity of new music and the growing number of composers who are rejected from the Festival and a wealth of composers who don't apply. There is an additional group of musicians who don't consider their music "new music." Almost every generation of composers wants to rebel against what came before and create something new, regardless of the name attached to the music. Some of those rebels then become part of the institutionalization of their music. Although there may have been some political agendas and non-musical issues connected with New Music America, it remains an opportunity to connect with some of the newest music around. Part of the strength of the New Music Across America festival is — like in much of its music — the quality of the unknown. We don't really know what will happen — and that is part of the beauty of music and of life. As composer Eleanor Hovda says, "Nothing survives unless it keeps churning around and changing."

So what is new music? What are people's perceptions of it? And what is the significance of New Music (Across) America? As I reflect on these questions and the recent death of John Cage, I am reminded of a Chinese expression: "What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly."

Iris Brooks specializes in contemporary and world flute music and has performed in Egypt, Iceland, Japan, Canada, Bali, and throughout Europe. Her articles on new music have been published in a variety of journals and she served as the editor of EAR Magazine.



Terry Riley: Minimalism, Mysticism, and More

By Tayloe Harding

While New Music Across America: Atlanta features approximately ten different musical presentations by composers and performers of both local note and national reputation, particularly highlighted is the music of American new music pioneer Terry Riley. For the Festival, Riley travels away from his solitary mountain studio in northern California to Atlanta, Georgia. His residency during the Festival allows for performances as well as discussion groups regarding his music and its influence upon other composers. Panel topics include Eastern influences, improvisation, and intonation.

Terry Riley is among the most significant figures in the emergence of American neo-tonal music of the 1960s. His music and thought from these years fostered a serious musical reaction to serialism and pre-compositional complexity which flourished in the 1950s. From his experiments with the minimalist, sound continuous environments of tape loops, to his explorations of multi-tunings and other Eastern musical influences, Terry Riley has come to define a whole musical generation. Since the '60s, he helped codify an expression of music as an improvisational process where influences of Eastern forms, listening, and ritual, play roles equal to those of musical materials which initiate traditional Western aesthetic experiences.

Riley's compositional evolution has been a significant one. In his early epic work *In C* (1964), Riley explores musical form and process in a startling new way by stating a steady pulse throughout while 53 short melodic phrases are repeated by an ensemble of indeterminate size. Performers are given choices about how to play and repeat the melodic fragments within a structured framework. After writing this piece, Riley focused more on improvisation and in the '70s devoted himself to North Indian music and solo work. His compositions *A Rainbow in Curved Air* (Columbia Masterworks) and *Shri Camel* (Columbia Masterworks) from this period feature Riley playing solo instruments in taped layers, along with recorded tape loops.

In the 1980s Riley again became interested in traditionally notated work, especially in his chamber music experiments such as a series of string quartets commissioned by the Kronos Quartet and his massive work for just intoned piano, *The Harp of New Albion*. (Celestial Harmonies). Mythology and shamanism also became important to Riley. *Salome Dances for Peace*, (recorded by Kronos on Elektra/Nonesuch) an elaborate 115-minute tone-poem, explores compassion for humanity in a story of sexual love, violence, reincarnation, and world peace.

photo: © Cristiana Ceppas



Terry Riley

More recently, Riley has written chamber works for traditional instruments as well as several large orchestral works. In the early '90s he composed *Jade Palace Orchestral Dances* (1989-90) commissioned by Carnegie Hall, *June Buddhas* (1991) for chorus and orchestra commissioned by the Koussevitsky Foundation and Library of Congress, and *The Sands* (1991) for string quartet and orchestra, commissioned by the Salzburg Festival. He also continues exploring a more personal and intimate expression through improvisation in performances with his ensemble, Khayal.

"I try to throw myself into the unknown of music's mysteries and learn more about them."

The '90s represent a symbiosis of all of the musical experiences and components of his own aesthetic evolution. His New Music America work, *St. Adolf Ring* (also performed at the L.A. County Museum in conjunction with a show of Adolf Woelfli's art), is a music theater piece for chamber ensemble inspired by the work of Swiss composer/artist/poet Adolf Woelfli. Diagnosed as a schizophrenic and confined to a mental institution for 35 years, Woelfli produced thousands of drawings based on numerology and his personal cosmology. Many incorporate a beautiful graphic music notation. Riley uses Woelfli's poetry, and works with the mathematical relationships inherent in Woelfli's art. Trying to understand musical intuition on a deeper level, Riley incorporates Woelfli's interests in numerology (working with primes based on seven and nine), tuning systems, and mysticism. Asked what's next, Riley responds, "I try to throw myself into the unknown of music's mysteries and learn more about them."

Young composers are constantly affected, either directly or subconsciously by the work of Terry Riley. Pieces that incorporate elements of rock, rhythm and blues, and other folk traditions of the Americas with Eastern and European musics in a context of tonality, belong to a genre largely defined by the work of Riley. He uses devices such as ostinati and drones as more than accompaniment, actually featuring these techniques as thematic material. This technique has become a staple in the works of many composers precisely because of *In C* and other seminal Riley works of the '60s and '70s. Further, what we know as the development of an alternative pop music in the late '60s (Velvet Underground, etc.) has as its parallel in the development of an alternative

"serious" music, the work of Terry Riley, LaMonte Young, and others and their effect on composers of our age.

Consistent with both the notion of Riley's influence and his music as inspiration, and the concept of the Festival as a Riley celebration, at least two local performing organizations, the Atlanta Contemporary Chamber Ensemble and Thamyris are producing Riley works as part of their own full-length programs. The ACCE presents the southeastern premier of a new work by Riley, composed as part of a consortium commission with two other composers and organizations, while Thamyris performs the new music classic *In C*.

Terry Riley and New Music Across America Atlanta are being presented by Living Composers, Inc. in a cooperative effort with the School of Music at Georgia State University and with the assistance of Special Audiences. The purpose of this union of divergent agencies is to initiate a model for future new music presenting in Atlanta, where such productions do not have a long and storied tradition. Presenting Terry Riley is particularly appropriate as a first effort, as the diversity and significance of his compositional output represents many styles and experiences from which a broad base of artistic support in the form of audiences can be fostered. The musical community of Atlanta is excited about featuring Riley's music in the context of local as well as national performers, and looks forward to the long-lasting effect we feel it can have on our citizenry.

Taylor Harding is the assistant director of the School of Music at Georgia State University where he teaches composition and electronic music. His works have been performed across the United States, Canada, Latin America, and Europe and he has received grants and commissions from the Ragdale Foundation, the Georgia Council for the Arts, The Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, The Georgia Arts Board, the Chicago Saxophone Quartet, and the New Music Foundation. His music is published by Mareba Music, Inc. and is available on Crest Records.

11/8

Ha Le Luh Jah The Lord is Crazy

girls who vex me bent croo... sed

x2

certainly do not give my hand to

7/4...3

x1

God BLESS and SING

x2

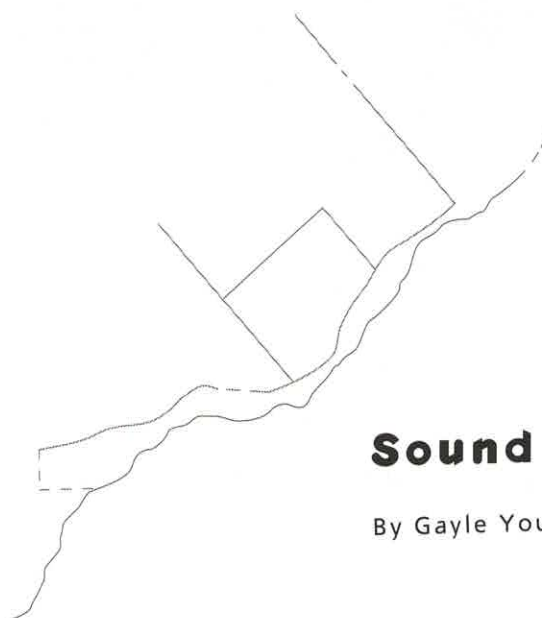
and SING the further hand

Spirit Adagio Rine

TERRY Riley
21 VIII 42

Automation Song #1

Terry Riley score fragment



Sound Art

By Gayle Young

In the last two years I organized two exhibitions of sound art in galleries. One of the most challenging aspects of organizing these exhibitions was presenting several sound pieces in one (often rather reverberant) room, without compromising the sonic quality of each piece. Or compromising it as little as possible. Pieces were placed so they didn't obscure one another either visually or aurally. Visitors to the exhibition could listen to and, where appropriate, produce sound at the same time. This process is somewhat difficult, not only because of the balance of sound levels, but because we as a culture are so unaccustomed to listening.

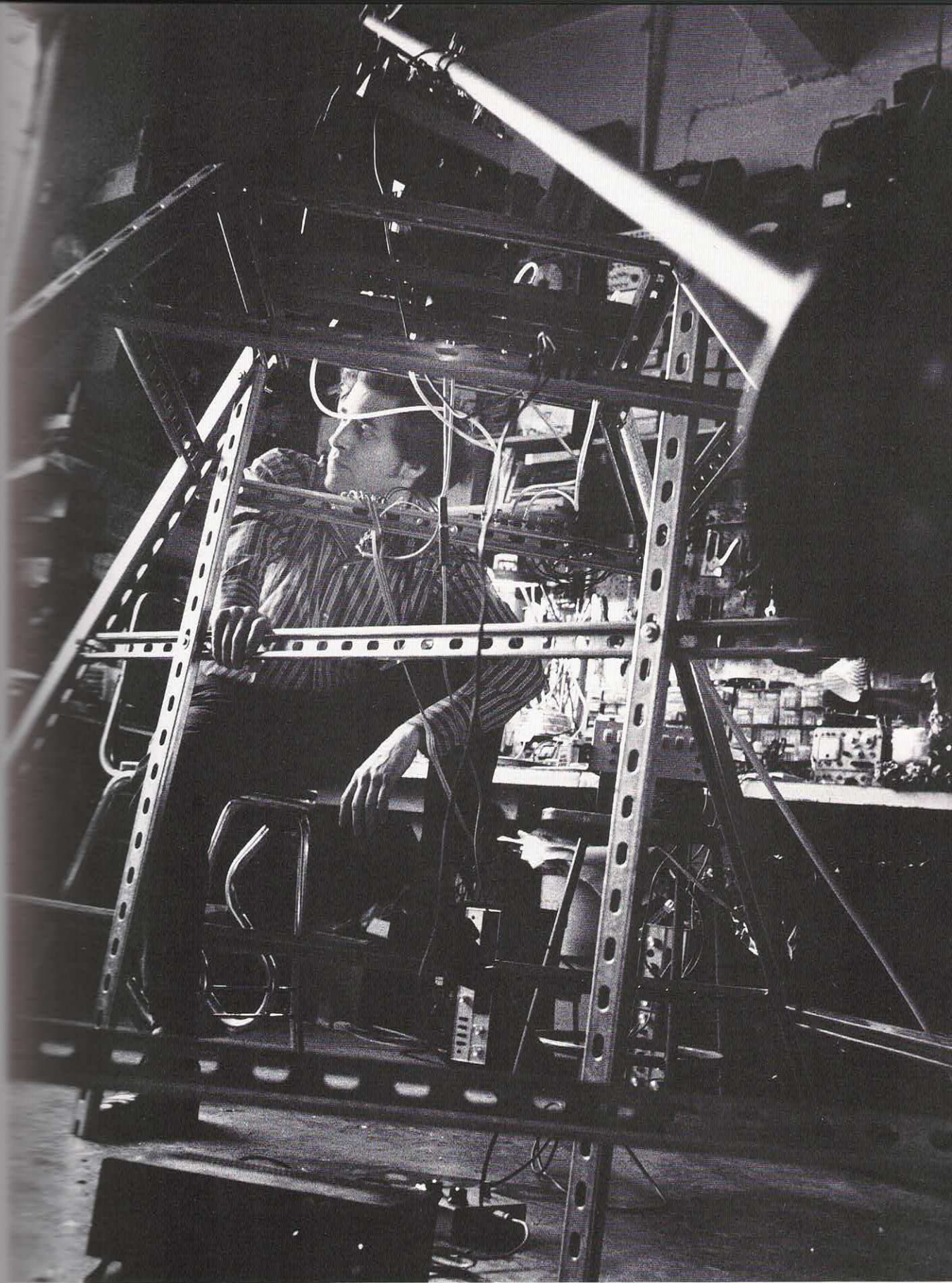
What is the effect of including sound in a visual art context? Most importantly, the silence of the art gallery is broken, often in a playful tone. First I notice more children than usual visiting the exhibitions. Then I notice that they don't seem to feel as inhibited as usual; lots of voice sounds in the gallery. Sometimes an older child will move from one piece to the next, figuring out in turn how each one works, and appear to be satisfied with his / her understanding. A simple piece, like a percussion instrument, is often passed over quickly, or tested for maximum volume capability. A form of listening, I suppose. But the most satisfying explorations are by young children

whose methods of serious play lead them to thorough explorations of things they find intriguing.

The presence of sound in an art gallery seems to encourage everyone, even adults, to become more actively engaged with the works, and their responses involve more than an often-detached observation of visual material. The sound element draws the listener into a different type of perception, where the senses of hearing and seeing are more integrated. In pieces which are activated by the listener, the tactile sense is also involved. The element of play is very important here. After all, we speak of "playing" our instruments.

What is the effect of including sound sculpture in a music festival? In sound sculpture, "music" loses some of its definition and becomes more closely integrated into a multi-media approach. It becomes "sound art:" it has no musicians, no composers, no audience. It seems that sometimes we make too radical a distinction between the visible and the audible in our culture in general. It has been described as a visually biased culture by Barry Truax (of the World Soundscape Project) and a visual / literate culture by Marshall McLuhan. Works combining visual and sound components can begin to bridge the gap.

This type of work expands the possibilities of music and sound art in general. Much as I like music,



Gordon Monahan

feel there is something liberating about not always working within a traditional music setting. Works of "sound sculpture" are often more playful in nature than concert "music." The public becomes intrigued in an active way with sound exploration — very different from the physically passive listening posture of a concertgoer. These two elements lead to a greater awareness of sound, in a soundscape sense. Perhaps it is because sound is not isolated in a controlled environment such as a concert hall that it broadens into a more comprehensive and engaging experience.

"We as a culture are so unaccustomed to listening."

New Music America festivals historically have undertaken several public sound installations in various settings, including art galleries and parks. Subway systems are engaging installation sites. Pieces installed there reach large numbers of people who would not otherwise encounter such work. At NMA, sound pieces were installed in the Philadelphia subway in 1987 by Bob Goldberg, in the Miami subway in 1988 by Gordon Monahan, and in the Montreal subway in 1990 by Robin Minard. Other sites included Chicago's Lincoln Park where Bill and Mary Buchen's *Wind Antenna* was installed in 1982, the Washington, D.C. Botanic Gardens where *Sweeping* was installed by Nic Collins in 1983, and a YMCA swimming pool in Houston, Texas where *Y-Pool Installation* by Mary Cullather was installed in 1986. But NMA festivals have largely consisted of concerts.

The type of large scale "sound sculpture" that has to be installed in a building is cumbersome both in terms of its physical presence and in terms of its time demands. Seldom a one-night event, these pieces are often displayed for weeks, as are works in galleries for the visual arts. A lot of them need electronic, or at least electrical support and maintenance, which is expensive. Some pieces need security, which is difficult to administer. And the use of public areas sometimes leads to confrontations with authorities, such as occurred in Miami in 1988 when a subway official was unpleasantly surprised by Gordon Monahan's piece and decided to ban it. After several days the piece was re-activated, but many New Music America visitors were unable to hear it.

For 1992, the organizers of the New Music Across America: Toronto festival asked Paul Lukeman and me to organize sound pieces in venues closely integrated with the two concert halls. Our most workable solution was to install pieces in the lobbies and

hallways of the buildings. During an event in which a concert is taking place at nearly every time of day, it is important that sound installations be easy to find. In lobbies and hallways they are "found" inadvertently during the intermissions, but difficult to hear since the environment is somewhat noisy. Perhaps the installations are just as marginalized in this location as they would be if they were in a quiet (but distant) gallery where viewers have to make a special effort to attend? Hallway and lobby works were selected with the limited attention of waiting audiences in mind: works designed for background perception being most effective. It is an ironic role for work whose intention is to bring attention to sound.

It is important to listen to sound art both inside and outside of concert halls. Listening is very important; not just artistically, but socially and politically. If only we listened to — one another for a start. It can take us out of the little cells of isolation in which we often find protection and security, but also where we become indifferent to the things we don't listen to.



photo: © D. James Dee

Bill and Mary Buchen's *Sound Machine*

Gayle Young, editor of *Musicworks Magazine*, has written the biography of and produced a recording of Hugh Le Caine, a pioneer designer of electronic instruments. Young has also designed site-specific sound pieces and two instruments using unorthodox tuning systems. She composes and performs with these as well as for electro-acoustic and orchestral instruments.

New Music Across America Festival Locations in 1992

UNITED STATES

California

Emily Hay, Music Director
Beyond Baroque Literary / Arts Center
P.O. Box 2727
681 Venice Boulevard
Venice, California 90291

David Rosenboom, Dean of Music
California Institute of the Arts
School of Music
24700 McBean Parkway
Valencia, California 91355

Georgia

Tayloe Harding, Director
Living Composers, Inc.
Music Department
Georgia State University
University Plaza
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Hawaii

James Furstenberg, Curator of
Program Development
Honolulu Academy of Arts
900 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Illinois

Leo Krumpholz, Director
Southend Musicworks
1313 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Maine

Bau Graves, Artistic Director
Portland Performing Arts
25 A Forest Avenue
Portland, Maine 04101

Minnesota

Sandy Moore, Managing Director
Southern Theater
(with Corn Palace Productions
and Cuicani)
1420 Washington Avenue, South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55454

Montana

Arnie Malina, Executive Director
Helena Presents
15 North Ewing
Helena, Montana 59601

New Mexico

Tom Guralnick, Executive Director
Outpost Productions
112 Morningside S.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108

Ohio

Dennis Maxfield, Director
Amy Sparks, Assistant Director
Sonic Disturbance
1607 Clark Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Pennsylvania

Lenny Seidman, Music Curator
Painted Bride Art Center
230 Vine Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

Utah

Phillip Kent Bimstein, Executive Director
New Music Utah
P.O. Box 301
Springdale, Utah 84767

Vermont

Philip Bither, Director of Programming
Flynn Theatre
153 Main Street
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Washington

Herb Levy, President
Soundwork Northwest
P.O. Box 95744
Seattle, Washington 98145

Wisconsin

Anne Kingsbury, Director
Woodland Pattern Book Center
P.O. Box 92081
720 East Locust Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212

CANADA

British Columbia

Ken Pickering, Artistic Director
Coastal Jazz & Blues Society
435 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6B 1L4 Canada

Ontario

Shannon Peet and Bruce Rosensweet,
Directors
Species / Red Door Productions
59 Gore Vale
Toronto, Ontario
M6G 2K6 Canada

EUROPE

GERMANY

Matthias Osterwold, Director
Freunde Guter Musik Berlin e.V.
Erkelenzdamm 11-13 BIV
1000 Berlin 36
Germany

HOLLAND

Jan Wolff, Director
De Ijsbreker
Weesperzijde 23 - 1091
EC Amsterdam
The Netherlands

New Music Across America Participating Artists in 1992

New Music Alliance

Board of Directors of New Music America

Tina Davidson, *President*
David Moss, *Vice-President*
Eleanor Hovda, *Secretary*
Carl Stone, *Treasurer*
Philip Bither
Iris Brooks
Neely Bruce
Ray Gallon
Karen Goldman
Guy Klucsevsek
Brian Johnson
Shannon Peet
Steven Swartz
Carol Tuynman
Jeanette Vuocolo

UNITED STATES

California

Birdsongs of the Mesozoic:

Michael Bierylo
Ken Field
Erik Lindgren
Rick Scott

Jane Ira Bloom Trio:

Jane Ira Bloom
Michael Formanek
Jerry Granelli

CalArts New Century Players

Challenge:

Anthony Braxton
David Rosenboom
William Winant

The Collage Ensemble:

Anisa
Tim Chan
Tonia Chen
Steven Irvin
Joyce Lu
Mark Matsumoto
Alan H. Nakagawa
Geeta Sharma
Jennie Thom
Reginald Zachary
Donald Crockett*
Dean Jacobs
Leslie Lashinsky
Mark Trayle

Ya Vas Gran Yuyu

Con Tu Mitote:
Arturo Cipriano
Jorge Pena
Isabel Tercero
Chinary Ung*

Georgia

Atlanta Contemporary

Chamber Ensemble:
Deborah Bennett
Jeffrey Kershner
Ben Leaptrott
Ed Riley
Marcia Riley
Harold Sharp
Howard Wershil*

Kyle Gann*

Georgia State University

Jazz Ensemble

Taylor Harding*

James Oliverio*

Terry Riley

Alvin Singleton*

Morton Subotnick*

Thamyras:

Peggy Benkeser
Cheryl Boyd-Waddell
Paul Brittan
Laura Gordy
Ted Gurch

Hawaii

Haunani Apoliona
Birdsongs of the Mesozoic
Michael Colgrass*
Aaron Copland*
Brad Ellis*
Kenny Endo
Don Freund*
Kazuo Fukushima*
Shoko Hikage
Nelson Hiu
Dennis Kam*
Issac Kanahale
Lori Laitman*
Kenneth Makuakane
Bailey Matsuda
Toshiro Mayuzumi*
Robert Aeolus Myers
John Kimura Parker*
Russell Peck*
Marina Piccinini
Prism Quartet:
Reginald Borik
Matthew Levy
Timothy Miller
Michael Whitcombe

Tim Ries*

George Rochberg*

Jerry Santos

Somei Satoh*

David Schiff*

Alan Trubitt*

Viklarbo Chamber Ensemble:

Jeff Elmassian
Maria Newman
Wendy Prober
Olly Wilson*
William Wolfram

Illinois

Hamid Drake

ROVA Sax Quartet:

Bruce Ackley
Steve Adams
Larry Ochs
Jon Raskin

Glen Velez

Edward Wilkerson Jr. &

8 Bold Souls:

Harrison Bankhead
Mwata Bowden
Aaron Dodd
Bob Griffen
Ike Jackson
Naomi Millender
Dushun Mosley

Michael Zerang

Maine

Active Culture

John Cage*

Otis Coyote

Ted Curson

Karin Dillman

Jennifer Elowitch
John Etnier
Thomas Faux
Bill Frisell Trio
Steve Grover Ensemble
Gregory Hall with
Mary Downing
Anatole Wieck
Thomas Zantow
Curtis Harvey
Steve MacLean and Band
New Klezmer Trio:
Ben Goldberg
Dan Seamans
Kenny Wollesen
Owen O'Toole
Mark Polishook
Scott Reeves
Marc Ribot and
the Rootless Cosmopolitans
Elliott Schwartz with
Tom Parchman
Barbara Truex with
Ken Lovelett
Bucky Milam
Luanne Warner

Minnesota

Jane Anfinson
Kitty Brazelton
Jeff Brooks
Mary Ellen Childs
Cuicani Orchestra Project
Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez*
Marjorie Hess*
Eleanor Hovda
Arthur Kampela*
Libby Larsen
Mary Jane Leach
Sowah Mensah
Carei Thomas
Jack Vees
Jeannine Wagar
Carl Witt

Montana

Robert Baran
Bill Borneman
Double Edge:
Edmund Niemann
Nurit Tilles
Shelley Hirsch
Robert Minden Ensemble:
Carla Hallett
Andrea Minden
Dewi Minden
Robert Minden
Carl Stone
Alexandra Swaney
David Weinstein

New Mexico

Las Animas
Architects Office
Suzie Baltzer*
Karen Cunningham*
Sydney Davis
Stefan Dill
David Dunn
Jane Ellen*
Eneke-the-Bird:
Ajule Rutlin
Heidi Wilson
Peter Garland*
Jagote:
Gordon Kennedy
Terry Sines
Jack Wright
Elise Kermani
Ruth Lomon*
Dwight Loop
New Mexico Women
Composers Guild
New Mexico
Woodwind Quintet:
Jessica Lewis
Lori Lovato
Beth Scott
Mary Ann Shore
Leslie Nelson Shultis
Zimbabwe N'Kenya
Molly O'meara*
Jorge Reyes
Arturo Salinas
Jenny Schwoebel
Maria Eugenia Segovia Q.
Christopher Shultis
Will Chills Simons
Jim Tenney*
Trans Duo:
LaDonna Smith
Davey Williams
University of New Mexico
Percussion Ensemble
Jane Viemeister

Ohio

Robert Ashley
Maarten Altena Ensemble
Carbon:
Zeena Parkins
Elliott Sharp
Marc Sloan
Voe Trump
David Weinstein
Joseph Celli
David First and
the Joy Buzzers
Jin Hi Kim
Only A Mother
Amy Sparks
Thruken:
Scott Davis
Chris Strollo
Dennis Maxfield

Z'ev

Pennsylvania

Gloria Galante
Global Music Quartet:
Xavier Leonard
Margo O'Keefe
Joe Ruscitto
Lisa Westerterp
Julia Haines
Giovanni Hidalgo
Zakir Hussain
Ice d'Lyricist
Airtio Moreira
David Murray with
12 local musicians
Sweet 'n Low

Utah

Phillip Kent Bimstein*
Caravan
Harold Carr
Robert Tree Cody
Commonplace
Brent Michael Davids
Natalie Fredericks
Henry Gwiazda
Idaho Syndrome
Kaibah (Kay Bennett)
Eleni Kambouris
Ingrid Karklins
Susan Kenney
Beth Mehocic*
Jimmy Miklavcic
Mixashawn with
Word, Out . . .
New Music Ensemble
(of University of Utah)
Ricklen Nobis*
Quintessence:
Barbara Davis Chao
Nancy Clauter
Thomas Greer
Jill Marderness
Anthony Masiello
Steven Roens*
Morris Rosenzweig
Springdale Elementary
school children
Glen Velez
Paul Winter

Vermont

American Music
Theater Festival
Bill Frisell Trio:
Joey Baron
Kermit Driscoll
Bill Frisell
David Gunn*
Brian Johnson
Robert Xavier Rodriguez*
Helen Schneider
Allen Shawn*
Carl Stone

Vermont Contemporary
Music Ensemble:
Elaine Greenfield
Steven Klimowski
Jill Hallett Levis
Thomas L. Read
Steven Stusek
Bonnie Thurber Klimowski

Washington

Martin Bartlett*
Jay Clayton
Lesli Dalaba
Stuart Dempster
Amy Denio
Bill Frisell
Janice Giteck*
Jeff Greinke
Andrew Hill
Robin Holcomb
Al Hood
Richard Karpen
MORE
Sergio Barroso
Peter Hannan
John Oliver
Jeff Morris*
Eric Muhs
New Performance Group:
Matthew Kocmicoski
Roger Nelson
Paul Taub
New Songs:
David Mahler
Ann Obery
Thomas Peterson*
Paul Plimley
Jarrad Powell*
Julian Priester
Randy Raine-Reusch
Michael Shrieve
Gregg Simpson
Esther Sugai*
Billy Tipton Memorial
Sax Quartet
Trimpin*

Wisconsin

Dance Circus
Eastern Earlines:
Abdulhamid Alwan
Don Linke
Steve Nelson-Raney
Scott Wenzel
Terry Jenoure Trio:
Terry Jenoure
Kamel Sabir
Gene Torres
Music From Almost Yesterday
ROVA Sax Quartet
Nacy Rumbel
Eric Tingstead
Glen Velez

CANADA

Toronto, Ontario

Maarten Altena Nonet
Louis Andriessen*

Arcana
Arraymusic:

Michael J. Baker
Beverley Johnston
Henry Kucharzyk
Rick Sacks
Robert W. Stevenson
Roberto Occhipinti
Michael White

Bang On A Can All-Stars:

Maya Beiser
Robert Black
Dan Kennedy
John Lad
J. D. Parran
Shannon Peet
Todd Reynolds
Steve Schick
Evan Ziporyn

Battery Park:

Bill Brennan
Mark Duggan
Paul Houle
Rick Sachs

Allison Cameron*

Gene Carl*

Jane Cortez and
the Firespitters
Double Sens with
members of Justine

Bob Fenton

5th Species:

Donald Hutton
Jon Siddall*
Shannon Peet
James Summerville
Ann Thompson
Libby Van Cleve

Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band:

David Buchbinder
Laura Cesar
Evelyn Datl
David Krakraver
John Lennard
Al Merovitz
Martin Van De Ven

Lori Freedman

Bill Frisell Trio

Bill Grove

Hemispheres Orchestra

Maartje Ten Hoorn

Mauricio Kagel*

Tina Kiik

Guy Klusevcek

David Lang*

Alvin Lucier*

Evan Lurie

Joe Macerollo

Joe McPhee

Lee Pui Ming

David Mott*

No Safety:

Pippen Barnett
Chris Cochrane
Zeena Parkins
Ann Rupel
Doug Seidel

Steve Parkinson*

Joe Petric

Paul Plimley Quartet:

Gregg Bendian
Lisle Ellis
Bruce Freedman

ROVA Sax Quartet

Polka Dogs:

Conlon Couch
Tina Kiik
John Millard
Ambrose Pottie
Tom Walsh

SCAM

Rodney Sharman*

Sound Image Theatre:

Jan Komarek
Rainer Wiens

James Tenney*

Upstream

Lois V Vierk*

Vancouver,

British Columbia

Maarten Altena Ensemble

Thomas Anfield's Post-Cecil

Taylor-Garage Music Orch.

Konrad Bauer Trio:

Peter Kowald
Tony Oxley

Wende Bartley

Martin Bartlett

Jean Beaudet

Gregg Bendian

DB Boyko

Brick on Brick:

Jean François Estager
James Giroudon
Alain Joule
Barre Phillips

Yves Charuest

Stuart Dempster

Paul Dolden

Guillaume Dostaler

Lisle Ellis

Bruce Freedman

Garbo's Hat:

Paul Blaney
Graham Ord
Kate Hammett-Vaughan

Barry Guy

Fritz Hauser

François Houle Et Cetera

ISKRA 1903:

Barry Guy
Paul Rutherford
Phil Wachsmann

Urs Leimgruber

London Jazz

Composers Orchestra

Henry Lowther

Paul Lytton

Ken Newby

Pauline Oliveros

Evan Parker

Simon Picard

Paul Plimley

Michel Ratté

Randy Raine-Reusch

Ron Samworth

Hildegard Westerkamp

EUROPE

Amsterdam, HOLLAND

Gene Carl

Nicolas Collins

Jimi Hendrix*

Joel Ryan

Elliott Sharp*

Soldier String Quartet:

Ron Lawrence

Laura Seaton

David Soldier

Mary Wooten

David Starobin

Eric Stokes

Michel Waisvitz

Berlin, GERMANY

Arnold Dreyblatt and

Orchestra of Excited Strings
and Winds

Jerry Hunt

Laura Kikauka

Gordon Monahan

The 13th Tribe:

Erik Balker

Werner Durand

Sylvia Ocougme

with guest Pierre Berthet

* refers to a composer who
is not performing

** Please note additional
artists may be included in
NMAA, but could not be
confirmed at publication
deadline.



Laura Kikauka

New Music America Past Festival Locations

1979

Rhys Chatham
Mary MacArthur
The Kitchen
New York, New York

1980

Nigel Redding
Walker Arts Center
Minneapolis Star
Minneapolis, Minnesota

1981

Robin Kirck
San Francisco Examiner
San Francisco, California

1982

Peter Gena
Alene Valkanas
Mayor's Office of Special Events
The Chicago Tribune
Museum of Contemporary Art
Chicago, Illinois

1983

Deborah Hanzlik
Bill Warrell
Bob Wisdom
Washington Performing Arts Society
9th Street Crossings Festival
District Curators, Inc.
Washington, D.C.

1984

Joseph Celli
Mary Luft
Real Art Ways
The Travelers Companies;
Associate Producer the Advocate Newspapers
Hartford, Connecticut

1985

Joan La Barbara
Carl Stone
Collaboration of 25 arts organizations.
Los Angeles, California

1986

Michael Galbreth
Jerry McCathern
Pauline Oliveros
The Houston Festival Foundation, Inc.
Houston, Texas

1987

Joseph Franklin
Relache
The Ensemble for Contemporary Music
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1988

Joseph Celli
Mary Luft
Tigertail Productions
Miami, Florida

1989

Yale Evelev
Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival
The Kitchen
Dance Theater Workshop
The Knitting Factory
Roulette
Prospect Park Picnic House
Experimental Intermedia
Performance Space 122
WNYC
New York, New York

1990

Jean Piché
Montréal Musiques Actuelles
Montréal, Québec
Canada

1991

No Festival

1992

New Music Across America
In 14 U.S. cities, two Canadian cities,
and two European cities.

New

Music Across America

Edited by Iris Brooks

“*New Music Across America* conveys the spirit of innovative American music in the 1990s, and the unique role played by the NMA festivals, better than any other single volume I know. It is, like its subject, more than slightly schizophrenic — by turns breezy, serious, irreverent, scholarly, eclectic, perceptive, whimsical, and subversive. Anyone interested in the creative arts of the late twentieth century will want to read it.”

Elliott Schwartz

Professor of Music, Bowdoin College,
Co-author, *Music Since 1945: Issues, Materials, Literature*

“For anyone worried that American music is becoming, like much of the rest of the culture, standardized mainstream fluff, *New Music Across America* is a refreshing reminder that American avant-garde and regional music is still tough and engaging — a cool and original B-side to pop culture’s greatest hits.”

Laurie Anderson

Artist

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“A valuable addition to our knowledge of what New Music America has been and what it might become.”

David Harrington

Kronos Quartet

“This exciting book celebrates and examines the newest music of our time within a geographic and cultural context. *New Music Across America*’s unique approach makes it compelling reading for anyone interested in contemporary music.”

Steven D. Lavine

President, California Institute of the Arts

“Along comes this book of wildly divergent but totally heartwarming statements from across this nation. This series of essays — from bleakest Cleveland and the God-blessed Utah canyons, from the so-called cultural deserts of California and the so-called cultural oases beyond the mountains — form encouraging evidence that the fight goes on. *New Music Across America* is a celebration we badly need. These essays make everywhere look, and sound, enticing.”

Alan Rich

Music Critic, *Los Angeles Weekly*

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